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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the interaction between church-related institutions and the way in which they shape society and are shaped in turn by the environment in which they operate. Like all schools they face operational challenges such as improving educational quality, promoting greater cultural diversity, coping with aging individuals and institutions, living in a complex society, opening campuses to globalization, responding to demands for gender equality, operating efficiently in a changed economic environment, and locating financial resources. Church-related schools face the unique challenges of: (1) how to preserve and promote the religious identity of the school; (2) how to improve relations between the school and its sponsoring body; and (3) how to incorporate religious commitment into institutional life. For the first it is suggested that church-related schools must institutionalize the fundamental mission of their existence. A commitment to reconciliation and communication, and articulation of the rationale for religious higher education is seen as the answer to the second. To meet the third challenge, the paper suggests that the answer lies in becoming proactive, drawing on religious resources to deepen the foundations of civic responsibility, and exercising religious imagination to find alternatives to resolve social conflict. (CH)

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Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges

Perspectives on the Current Status of and Emerging Policy Issues for Church-Related Colleges and Universities

By The Reverend William McInnes

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Executive Summary

The age of the environment has arrived for higher education.

The interaction of the environment and the church-related colleges and universities will call for both responsiveness and initiative in the decade ahead. Some of the changes in the environment since World War II that will affect higher education include:

1. The rise of giant market places and giant states.
2. The slowdown of economic growth.
3. A pervasive mood of pessimism.
4. New social, cultural, scientific breakthroughs: the ending of the Cold War, the opening of new East-West relationships and the explosion of technology.

To adapt to environmental conditions and to initiate change, church-related institutions will need to understand the challenges facing all colleges and universities and then bring a distinctive perspective to their resolution.

The challenges:

1. How can colleges and universities improve the quality of education?
2. How can they promote cultural diversity in the community?
3. How can they adapt to the aging of individuals and institutions?

4. How can they learn to live as responsible citizens in a pluralistic society?
5. How can the campus be opened to globalization?
6. How can the institution respond to the increasing demand for gender equality?
7. How can the institution operate efficiently in a changed economic environment?
8. How can the financial resources needed to fuel the system be located and applied?

In addition to sharing the challenges of other higher education institutions (since they are primarily educational organizations), church-related colleges and universities have a distinctive character of their own. They, therefore, will confront distinctive issues, such as:

1. How to preserve and promote the religious identity of the institution.
2. How to improve relations with the sponsoring body.
3. How to incarnate the basic religious values of the sponsoring church, simultaneously preserving academic autonomy and freedom.

The future of church-related colleges and universities is neither automatic nor guaranteed. But their unique contribution to U.S. higher education will demand more committed and knowledgeable trustee leadership than ever before.

The discovery, recruitment and preparation of such leaders may be the number one challenge for the trustees of church-related institutions in the decade ahead.

The Future of Church-Related Colleges and Universities

Colleges and universities are major agents of social change in the United States. They are also the objects of change. They shape society in distinctive ways. They, in turn, are increasingly shaped by the environment in which they operate. The age of the environment has arrived for higher education.

The purpose of this paper is to explore that interaction as it is manifested in the over 800 church-related institutions with a total enrollment of over 1 million students.

Since the church-related college/university is primarily an academic institution it shares both the joys and anxieties of its 2,700 public and private sister institutions. Thus, the first section of this paper will suggest operational challenges that church schools will confront along with the rest of the academic community. They are:

1. How to improve the quality of education.
2. How to promote greater cultural diversity.
3. How to adapt to the aging of individuals and institutions.
4. How to live as a citizen in a complex society.
5. How to open the campus to globalization.
6. How to respond to the increasing demand for gender equality.
7. How to operate efficiently in a charged economic environment.
8. How to locate and use well the financial resources needed to fuel the system.

Church-related colleges/universities are challenged by all of the above. They enjoy no religious exemption from reality. But those same institutions

can bring some distinctive responses to those issues. Further, they must confront other issues uniquely their own. Thus the second section of this paper will address three distinctive challenges that church-related schools face in the next decade:

They are:

1. How to preserve and promote the religious identity of the school.
2. How to improve relations between the school and its sponsoring body.
3. How to incorporate the distinctive religious commitments into the routine life of the institution.

Trustees of church-related colleges have much to learn from other types of institutions. But they also have a very special contribution to make to higher education by their leadership of one significant category of that community.[1]

The Setting

Major cultural changes over the past 40 years have had a significant impact on all of higher education. Frequently, under the pressures of time and interest, boards of trustees have overlooked these megatrends. But these environmental factors have affected-- for better or worse -- how colleges and universities have lived and died. Their influence will probably be even more

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[1]. These observations and speculations are the end result of experience and consultation. The conclusions, however, are entirely subjective and personal-- fodder for discussion more than final solutions of problems. They are meant to stimulate rather than stun.

dominant in the decade ahead as the academic community becomes more socialized. The environment -- economic, political, cultural -- can no longer be ignored.

The first major environmental change is the steady growth of markets and government. The giant marketplace and the giant state have become dominant structures on the social scene. Thus all colleges have seen themselves subjected more and more to "market forces" and to "bottom-line" efficiency. They have turned more and more eagerly to governments for financial assistance, even while protesting chronically excessive government interventions. Church colleges have generally moved with the pack in seeking new revenues.

Today both the marketplace and the state have become acknowledged partners in the educational enterprise. The current -- and future -- question is not <u>whether</u>, but <u>how</u> the partnership -- will work. In any case, that partnership- with its benefits and quarrels -- is likely to continue to grow, with the outcome determined more by alert leadership than by established precedents. There is opportunity as well as risk ahead.

The dramatic slowdown of economic progress in recent years is a second environmental factor for the future trustees to ponder. After two decades of inflation-fed prosperity, the bills are now coming due. The outlook is bleak. The education sector, where costs have been rising faster than inflation for a decade, will be more than ever under the gun to control costs, cut back its budget -- and at the same time increase the quality of its product. That's a juggling act for which many prosperity-born administrators are unprepared and over which many trustees are not ready to preside.

The poor economic and social outlook has cast a negative mood over society. The optimists of the 60's and 70's have given way to the pessimists of

the 90's. The end of the Reagan and Milliken era has spawned a wave of gloom and cynicism not only over the general citizenry but over the higher education establishment as well. There is less talk of expansion and new programs, more of retrenchment and restoration. Even the public mood toward education has turned sour. Though the demise of the patient has been prematurely predicted, still there is a pessimism that will have to be reckoned with, not only in approaching one's public but in choosing and monitoring one's staff.

Right now the country seems to have come down from a euphoric "high." It is becalmed in a widespread lack of mutual trust. At such a moment of history's cycle, trustees face new demands to affect the corporate culture of the campus and to promote faculty, administrative and board leadership.

Feelings, as the psychologists delight in warning us, cannot be ignored.

On the plus side are major paradigm shifts on the cultural/scientific scene: the ending of the Cold War, the opening of new relationships between East and West, the rapid strides of technology, especially in communications. These changes suggest not only a new horizon for schools but a redefinition of their mission.

Education needs a climate of political and social peace in order to function. Barriers between nations hinder not only the free interchange of knowledge but also the free relationship of people. Business leaders are already exploiting new opportunities in China and Eastern Europe. "Globalization" has become a recognizable term -- though not yet a widely operative principle -- on the agenda of many schools. The conditions for educational globalization now exist; the exploitation of opportunity is a task ahead. It is a challenge to be seriously addressed.

The changing political, economic, social, cultural and demographic environment has established the setting for trustee leadership in the 90's. But it does not guarantee its success. That will depend more on trustee understanding of the priority issues confronting their institutions and the corporate responses to those challenges.

We need to review some specific issues:

*1. How do we improve the quality of education?

For many educators of the past this was a non-question. It was presumed, not needing demonstration. But the public clamor over the rising expenditures on education and the perceived poor results manifested in the graduates of the system have turned unexamined loyalty into deep cynicism. The criticism has been focused on certain types of schools (e.g. inner city high schools, large research universities, trade schools), but the smear has splattered on many others. Education has been long revered and little examined, its quality taken for granted. It has been idealized as a ladder of upward mobility, a path to success, a substitute for a church. But since the 60's that image has been shattered. Restoration of confidence is now the order of the day. Then more innovation.

Today the institution has been subjected to waves of professional investigation, clamors of political rhetoric, tons of public funds and new front-page prominence in the mass media, especially when the news is bad. It is no longer an ivory tower -- the consequence of a paradigm shift which trustees need to appreciate and to which they must respond.

Some academics do not accept all this finger-pointing at themselves. After all, they argue logically, entering students have not been getting better, so we cannot do better. Further, surveys confirm that motivation for learning

and altruism have been declining steadily since the 70's. Students are not even as adventurous as the protesters of the 60's. Their protests have become socially acceptable, more temperate and better attended. Rebellion seems to have been institutionalized -- but not educational reform.

Beneath the facade of complacency, however, educational leaders have become sufficiently self-conscious to commission studies and reports that probe the mysteries of teaching and learning process, call for a new balance between teaching and research, declare the importance of a congenial environment, and point out the homogenization of the establishment, even as many schools are pressed by tough competition. Unfortunately, there is more handwringing than movement, more pouting than action, more rhetoric than reform.

Probably the greatest challenge in this area will be to find out how to improve the quality of teaching. This suggests a far deeper probe than the study of techniques or the support of schools of education (or the wiping out of those schools).

The academic affairs committee therefore, will have a broad new mandate to encourage a distinctive quality education. Quality lies at the heart of the enterprise; it can determine the life or death of the school.

*2. <u>How do we promote cultural diversity in the community</u>?

Counterpoint to the desire to improve the quality of education is the equally pressing desire to accommodate new types of learners. Traditionally, elementary and secondary education have been populist; higher education has been elitist. But since the Second World War -- and the G.I. Bill -- there has been an explosion of populism at the post-secondary level. This movement has even been institutionalized in the community colleges of the U.S. -- one of the

few truly innovative changes in higher education in this century. It has been manifested in a quadrupling of enrollments since 1945 -- to over 12 million students. But neither institutionalization nor expansion has solved the scandal of unequal opportunity.

Better access has been given to returning soldiers, women, blacks and Hispanics, the new wave of immigrants in the 80's, and older adults (the fastest growing sector in higher education today). But new numbers have opened new challenges -- which are likely to increase. The legitimate demand for equality of both access and opportunity of all classes, backed by strong public support and strict legislation, has become a major agenda item for school administrators. They are confronted not only with the demand for higher enrollments, but also with the even more difficult challenge of preparing, recruiting and retaining minority faculty. They will need stronger trustee support of their efforts, more encouragement of experimentation, more leadership if they are to make even a small breach in this impenetrable wall.

Just as public relations/development activities surfaced in the 70's so cultural diversity issues will probably take up more and more energy in the 90's- as the public , the courts, the legislators and the media press the issue.

The numbers game is not the only one in town. There is the consequential issue of relating a traditional quality of life to the new ethnic pluralism. After successfully recruiting "minority" faculty, students and staff, the task of cultural integration and the impact on institutional mission will remain. Harmony has never been automatic, especially in areas where the viability of <u>all</u> present student-living arrangements and activities are up for grabs. Every new member of a community that is a living tradition brings a new possibility -- and a new risk -- to that group. The academic community prides itself on its openness to learning. Now it is being challenged to be open

to all (eligible) applicants. That is placing new demands for greater access to learning opportunities as well as new concerns for institutional integrity.

This is one area where individual institutions are finding almost insurmountable obstacles. Perhaps only collaborative efforts will be able to marshall sufficient resources and imagination to cope with a social problem of such large dimensions.

Cultural diversity is an issue much broader than the campus. It requires corporate community commitment and action.

Professional research can explore and support courses of action. But schools themselves must implement the research. This implies new attitudes and efforts in joining other institutions in a common mission. The choices are no longer exclusively academic, which raises serious new questions of mind-set and attitude that are not always familiar to many trustees.

*3. <u>How do we adapt to the aging of individuals and institutions</u>?

Both people and institutions grow old. Aging is inevitable. But in our youth culture it is demeaned and swathed in double-talk rhetoric. A campus is for young people. That is the traditional wisdom. But meanwhile its members are aging: faculty, administrators, even students.

In our aging society the issue of finding suitable replacements for faculty and administrators will arise more frequently. The academic establishment has been able to exempt its faculty from the legislatively mandated removal of age as a factor of forced retirement. But the exemption runs out in 1992, and with the present public mood and the lobbying power of older people, the continuance of that exemption is unlikely. It's an issue on which trustees may want to declare themselves positively before being forced to react negatively.

What is often overlooked is that institutions, as well as people, grow old. The decaying of campus buildings from deferred maintenance and the greying of faculty and administrators serve as visible reminders that institutions as well as individuals are subject to the cycles of life. With age can come hardening of the intellectual arteries and resistance to change. A school that is not open to change -- in program, people and even mission -- can quickly become a dinosaur in a rapidly changing social and technological environment. A periodic check-up on the inroads of aging might provide good preventive medicine for institutions subject to the degenerative diseases of old age.

#4. How do we live as responsible citizens in a pluralistic society?

Like the Berlin Wall, the ivory tower of higher education has been pulled down. Colleges and universities are now expected to act as full-scale citizens -- with old rights that they defend but also with new responsibilities that they must shoulder. Schools have become the beneficiaries of many public benefits -- exemptions from taxes, favored locations, privileged judicial standing, respect as a privileged resident of the place. Now they are being called open to share wider public burdens. The burgeoning financial needs of government, the new invasion of public tranquility by students, and the voyeuristic attention from the media are putting more and more pressure on schools for both remuneration and accountability.

The bill for social privilege is coming due. Like most other bills it is likely to acquire interest before it gets paid off.

The new mandate for responsible citizenship requires both sober understanding and active response. Some schools have already begun to anticipate the demand for local-government revenues by donations in lieu of

taxes. Both as individual institutions and coalitions -- regional and national -- they have mobilized defensive forces for representation.

In the decade ahead trustees will certainly have to increase their understanding of political structures, become more involved personally and bring greater sophistication to their political advocacy. They will need simultaneously to be constantly on the alert for any government adventuring that could erode the autonomy of their institutions. Since public confrontations generally don't take place on academic turf or on academic terms, trustees and administrators will have to prepare to fight in strange arenas. A public policy committee of the board would serve a current need, fill a present vacuum, and gird the board for action in the days ahead.

Far greater sophistication will be needed in dealing with the media. Higher education, even with a sympathetic audience (though often an unfriendly or ignorant press) has not been notably successful in clarifying complex economic issues that affect it (witness the price/cost confusion). They have not succeeded in justifying their growing costs or in defending their marauding, alcohol-driven students. Frequently, response to an embarrassing or delicate situation is re-active, not pro-active. That is no longer adequate.

The positive case for higher education must still be made to the many publics of our society -- and the schools themselves must make it.

#5. <u>How do we open the campus to globalization</u>?

In 40 years the United States has been thrust to new world leadership, not merely by declaration, but by the rush of events both political and technological. All colleges and universities now live in a global society, a new environment.

The stream of students to American schools continues. The percentage of doctoral degrees earned by non-citizens rose from 15% in 1972 to 26% last year. The trickle of American schools to other countries is slow -- but it, too, is increasing. The Japanese have led the way to institutionalized globalization by buying schools in the United States. Much rhetoric and academic research have accompanied the rapid growth of exchange, yet large resistance to any foreign invasion still hangs over many U.S. schools. The implications -- cultural and economic -- of globalization are great and largely unknown. The risks are real. The consequences for the future quality of life in the U.S. are grave. Business corporations have more readily moved ahead to this new world, perhaps because they can escape from some of the consequences . The education community has dragged its feet and is less likely to escape the fallout. But educational leaders will be called upon more frequently to articulate the role of the college/university in this cultural sea-change now swirling around us. Whether it wants to or not, the academic community must move into the global society.

*6. <u>How do we respond to the increasing demand for gender equality</u>?

Males have long dominated the higher education scene in America. That state of affairs is rapidly disappearing, although the new cultural configurations are not yet clear. Hence the consequences have yet to be adequately assessed.

An emerging self-consciousness by women (and some men) backed by political clout, broader educational credentials and media accessibility have thrust feminism to center stage in this decade. Male resistance, fortified by a glass ceiling on opportunity, have partially blocked the movement, but the underlying cultural forces are far too strong to be resisted for long. This is a

highly relevant issue to be faced by all boards, and especially by some church-related boards which have been overwhelmingly populated by males overseeing traditionally male schools.

An examination of board composition for gender makeup is just the beginning step in confronting both a long festering problem and a golden opportunity. The worst approach would be abdication of concern, by either men or women.

#7. How do we operate efficiently in a changed economic environment?

The contracting economy has not only shaped our plans, it has colored our mood. Academics are not only consolidating; they are sulking. A renewed energy and optimism are needed.

Effectiveness of operations begins at the top . The board of trustees sets directions. Its members are key leaders in the life and direction of every school. They do not operate the institution, but they do direct policy. Since they are the representatives of society, they are ultimate authorities for the existence and vitality of the institution. That is a heavy responsibility.

Committee activity, construction of agenda, selection of the president, choice of future members; these are the essential ingredients of successful board meetings in the 90's. The ceremonial board has served its purpose and seen its day. This needs to be the decade of the working board.

In the modern environment of shared decision-making, collegiality moves to the center as a process. This is the decade of the team; the lone ranger executive is dead. Many businessmen, used to the old style of individualistic decision making and thrown off prematurely by a chronic academic disease of talking too much at meetings, tend to be fearful of the notion of collegiality, especially in its stereotyped forms ("not another

committee!"). But people today simply won't respond to authority unless they can participate in the decision-making. They want to be involved -- not only after but before the event. Shared leadership is a difficult art. It requires clarification of roles and incentives to join in. Regardless of the difficulties, it is absolutely necessary in today's world.

After some experimentation, collegiality can become an acquired taste. Also, at least partly, a science.

*8. <u>How do we locate and apply the financial resources needed to fuel the system?</u>

This element of the future seems obvious and thus requires no restatement. Most trustee meetings are already dominated by financial considerations, though not always in a helpful way. Outsiders often take financial stability for granted. They become very frustrated when the trustees unexpectedly announce another budget cut or a new capital campaign.

The problems of stable finances are chronic: aspirations far beyond limited resources, budgets carefully crafted yet quickly out of control, costs rising faster then inflation, student financial aid eating up larger resources even while lagging behind demonstrated need, three generations of uninhibited growth. The financial dimensions of most academic problems are so prominent that attention to them often distorts the issue and prompts only crisis solutions. A new perspective is needed.

There is no need to urge close trustee supervision of fund raising and budgeting. Almost every board has a committee for each of these activities, and they both appear on almost every agenda. But the committees will need better integration with the institution's mission and the priorities set by the

academic affairs committee. The luxury of ad hoc financial (or educational) ventures can no longer be tolerated.

The need for professional fund raising structures and activities and for strong budget control will probably continue unabated. The new challenge will be to connect these with the mission of the school, the priorities of strategic planning, and the meaningful monitoring of results.

Conclusion

The above environmental and operational challenges to higher education in the next decade will have an impact on all higher education institutions, including church-related colleges and universities. Trustees of the latter institutions, therefore, need to be as aware of, and responsive to, these challenges as the guardians of other institutions.

Trustees of church colleges in addition, can bring a distinctive perspective to those issues, not by ignoring or denying them, but by responding to them from the vantage point of their own faith and commitment. After all, faith should be an operational principle in a faith-related institution.

An instructive board-retreat exercise would be to ask the question: what distinctive perspective do we bring to the issues raised above? The answers -- and discussion -- could be revealing.

Trustees may read Alvin Toeffler or John Naisbitt or other gurus to locate the social megatrends of the 90's. They need also to draw on their own experience and expertise to contribute to that dialogue.

The above list may seem ponderous. It is. But so are the challenges to higher education in the 90's. For consolation, consider the agenda of the (most recent convention of) college lawyers: regulation of student life, Supreme

Court review, federal and state legislature, racial harassment, retirement programs, campus security, recruiting minorities, date rape, technology transfer, accreditation, health risks on campus, faculty litigation, athletics, disabilities act, government contracts, restricted admissions, code of student conduct, current tax issues.

If it is harder to be a trustee of a college today, it is probably impossible to be its legal counsel.

II

Now let us consider the distinctive challenges to the leadership of church-related colleges and universities.

There are three priority concerns for the future:

1. <u>How do we preserve and promote the religious identity of the institution?</u>

Maintaining the religious identity of an institution has been a perennial concern of church-related colleges and universities. In recent years it has been widely discussed, at least by certain representatives of the institution. It has never been laid to rest.

So it remains on the agenda.

The fundamental question, "Who are you?", can never be answered once and for all. Hence continued probing and reformulation. The question keeps reappearing, especially when anxiety levels run high (which is probably the worst time for a detailed discussion of the issue). In recent times it has even begun to annoy those who have long probed the topic. They sometimes feel the well of imagination has gone dry. "What more is there to say?" "Let's close the discussion." Their annoyance often arises from the way the topic is approached rather than from a sense of resolution of the issue.

The question will not disappear. Neither anxiety nor frustration circumscribe the reality of identity. But each can bring forth much rhetorical smoke. The result: many mission statements, rhetorical presidential declarations and the occasional raising of the topic at board meetings. By the time the results are printed in the catalogue the message has the vitality of a museum piece. But at least there was some intellectual productivity in the process.

Why the prolonged interest? Because identity (and its counterpart, mission) are central to the life and direction of a school.

"Who are we?" "What are we trying to do?" The question remains.

Church-related schools have a special need for an identity or mission statement because their rationale is not found wholly in the general identity statements of other academic institutions. They have a distinctive raison d'etre which is important (in varying degrees) to trustees and sponsoring bodies.

That foundation must be continuously articulated. If the mission statement is not the consensus result of representatives of both church and academy, the seeds of bickering have already been sown. When the statement is not kept alive and current by discussion and adaptation, trouble can be the likely outcome. Without a sense of mission and identity, quarrels lose their anchor, accomplishments lose their sheen. The result: no viable reference point for standards. The dialogue and probing must go on, as difficult as is the topic.

Though interest in the issue of identity remains strong, satisfying approaches remain elusive. Why? Because dialogue on the subject presupposes some thread of consensus on premises, a capacity to handle an abstruse vocabulary in theology and philosophy, a compassionate insight into

the nature of academic freedom and autonomy, a freedom from rigid religious fundamentalism, a representative group of participants, and a positive momentum toward resolution of the issue.

It is hard to realize all of these conditions at once. General conclusions are hard to reach. The varieties of church-related colleges stubbornly resist categorization. So the topic will continue to take political as well as philosophical skills to reach even a limited consensus.

Perhaps joint efforts have a greater chance for success than attempts by individual institutions. The 1972 Land O' Lakes statement on the Nature of the Catholic University seems to have stood the test of time for Catholic colleges. The Denominational Executives, an ecumenical group of institutional representatives affiliated with the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in Washington, has been groping toward a common definition of the church-related college for several years. Their limited consensus suggests the complexity of the task. Still they continue the work . Once the predilection for neatness of ideas and a Cartesian clarity are by-passed, the process may move forward more rapidly. Even in slow movement, however, there is benefit. At least those engaged in the dialogue deepen their own insights and keep alive their own concerns. The same is probably true for most trustees.

Several of the elements for an identity/mission statement already exist: the acknowledgement of an academic reality with a foundation in faith, the acceptance of theological truth as worthy of study, the goal of a community of learning and service , the necessity of a value orientation in the curriculum and faculty, the requirement of joint citizenship in the City of Man and the City of God. The pieces are there. The challenge is to join those concepts

coherently and to articulate them convincingly without ever expecting an "ultimate solution."

Trustees are not always conditioned by background or temperament to do that.

Though it is hard to prepare an identity statement, it is even harder to institutionalize it and to explain it to the many publics of the institutions. Much rhetoric gets lost in translation into action.

Many presidents of church-related colleges and universities have bulky files of identity and mission-statement speeches. Those addresses and papers reflect sincere thought and frequent public utterance. But often such insights don't really stimulate the faculty or become operational through the structure. Thus they never seep into the curriculum or motivate the daily decisions that direct the institutions. The challenge, therefore, is not so much to come up with a intricately reasoned definition as to implement in a credible way the faith that the definition expresses. That may mean, rather than faculty convocations with presidential addresses, creation of a responsibility within the administration for promoting the religious identity of the school, tightening of faculty recruiting measures to elicit from candidates explicitly their commitment to the mission of the school, faculty orientation sessions, a program for introducing values into the curriculum where appropriate, and the creation of an on going center or institute to address the unexamined issues where faith and learning intersect.

It is somewhat surprising that very few church-related schools have institutionalized, through the creating of specific administrative positions or of institutes, this fundamental area of their existence.

Trustees are the ones who have to keep this topic of identity on the table. They will need to become up-to-date in their reading on the subject, to

organize the board itself to recognize its responsibility and to hold administrators accountable for results. That, at least, will be a beginning.

2. How do we improve relations with the sponsoring bodies?

Trustees will also need to revitalize the lines of communication with their sponsoring bodies. That is the subject of our second priority.

The existence of an external sponsoring body is a distinctive feature of the church-related college and university. It gives the institution life; it also causes problems. The relationship of church and school may be expressed in varying formats of control and influence among different denominations. All however, manifest a common interest on the part of the sponsoring body for the success of their educational offspring (no matter how truculent). The relationships also indicate a real concern on the part of academic officials (at least some trustees, a core group of faculty and, of course, the president) to keep alive the religious heritage of the institution. Everyone likes to be distinctive. But how do you do preserve and promote it? A common recognition of mutual interest is a beginning.

The relationship in recent years has become more strained and distant. It needs renewal.

Colleges and universities can be restless adventurers. Like children, they wander away on their own pursuits. Like maturing adults, they discover their own autonomy and interests and go their own ways. Working-in competition with other educational institutions, they imitate other ways (both good and bad), and they copy other structures. They easily drift away from original intent. Like married offspring with their own families, they generally don't want to disengage themselves completely from their religious family, but they must respond to their own goals. In one sense they can't

separate themselves completely from their parentage, even by declaration. They are always part of the family. The spirit lingers. But the relationship can sour -- sometimes even to the point of polarization and separation. That has become acutely evident in the past two years in certain denominations.

Under pressure to copy their prestigious secular counterparts and to conform to professional standards (witness the historic evolution of the AAUP Statement on Academic Freedom with its religious exemption), many religiously based schools played down their religious identities in the 60's. They added faculty indifferent to their own religious values and proclaimed themselves "just like the rest of men." But that pretentiousness seems now to have peaked. A better balance of prestige and basic commitment is being sought -- and talked about. The challenge, therefore, is not to muster a new defense for religious higher education, but to articulate its rationale and exploit positively its possibilities.

The fault lies not just with one side. Sometimes church elders have not always kept abreast of the rapid changes in higher education. They have suspiciously viewed curricular changes as a sell-out, the laicization of boards as a dilution of church integrity, the new modes of student permissiveness as a betrayal of fundamental values, the general movement of the school as secularized. Disaffection, fed by frustration and lack of communication, has run deep -- even to the point of cutting off finances and seeking disaffiliation.

Church and school have become family drifting apart. Both feel a sense of loss. But neither is sure how to effect reconciliation. Trustees could play a key role in this process -- as long as they consider reconciliation worthwhile.

The first step is to show a genuine concern for this separation. Trustees need to review their own actions and ask whether they should not pay more attention to their sponsors (at least as much as to their donors). They also need

to work out new methods for educating sponsors about higher education. They need to re-establish lines of communication so that problems will not become chronic and people will not become polarized. They need to manifest a genuine interest in being educated by church elders regarding church mission and aspirations.

One of the most important things a board could do is to invite members of the sponsoring body to dinner.

Trustees need to convince themselves they have much to learn -- and much to give. That is essential. Each party needs to know where the other partner stands. More time together is an essential premise, more honest dialogue a condition for smoother relations in their central area, for it touches the very soul of the institution.

Elders, on the other hand, need to be exposed to new academic realities: the need for relative autonomy by the educational institution, the demands of a pluralistic society, the difference between secularization (a process) and secularism (a result). The antagonism between academic freedom and unexamined fundamentalism must be contested. If trustees need to be taught to pray, church leaders need to learn how to study.

Many church and school leaders are conscientiously concerned about the future of the church-related college and university in our changing society. Almost all would agree that somehow education and religion should go together. But they have to realize that partnership is no longer automatic and cannot be taken for granted. Trustees and elders will have to deliberately renew it. That can begin only where each party learns to talk with the other - and listen. Where both partners agree that faith commitment and academic routine are not an either/or choice but a balancing act, restored harmony will be one step nearer. Then both can join together to influence the wider world

of higher education about the relevance and reality of faith to reason, for faith for many academics remains largely beyond the accepted academic canons of concern. That should be the central focus of both groups.

3. How do we incarnate the basic religious values of the sponsoring church?

Traditionally, the rules of living and the expectations of students on the campus of church-related colleges were clearly defined and obediently acknowledged. Today that cohesiveness of understanding has been shattered, bringing new challenges to both teachers and learners.

Almost overnight a host of difficult and controversial issues, generally focusing on sex or free speech have arisen:

1. Should abortion advertising and advocacy be allowed in the campus media?
2. Should clubs espousing homosexuality or lesbianism be officially recognized or even allowed?
3. Should condoms be sold in the bookstore?
4. Should organizations like the KKK be allowed a forum on campus?
5. Should the use of alcohol be more restricted?

No one in an institution that espouses freedom -- of thought, inquiry, expression or association -- publicly announces in favor of limits of action or expression. Yet unlimited freedom has historically led to harassment, violence, even chaos. Educational institutions have taken slow measures to confront the many problems in this area -- and mostly by negative reaction. Trustees have often ducked the issues, cloaked themselves in anonymity and delegated responsibility to lesser luminaries of the institution. So other social agents have moved in: e.g.the courts reacting against unfettered student

license, federal legislation demanding new accountability through reporting of campus crimes and graduation rates, the media sensationalizing campus protests and social conflicts.

Reactive response to these issues is no longer adequate. The challenge is to become pro-active, to draw on the religious resources for deeper foundations of civic responsibility and to exercise wider religious imagination in finding alternatives to current stand-offs. The issues cited above are not unique to church-related institutions. What is unique is the spiritual insight that can inform a response by faith-inspired leaders: accepted standards of civil discourse, clear norms of expected conduct by all members of the campus community, on going exploration of faith and learning, probing of both assent and dissent, of freedom and responsibility. Further, an unfaltering insistence on respect for the human person because of his/her dignity and spiritual destiny provides a basic premise, and a prized religious value, for building a learning community of faith -- which is really getting around to the definition of a church-related college.

The answers are not evident or clear-cut. But the responsibility for initiative is pointed: it lies with the trustees.

Building a cohesive, knowledgeable and committed board is a primary task for educational leaders today if they are to respond reasonably and distinctively to the above concerns. It will not be enough to delegate to others the responsibilities for resolution of these issues. It will have to be the duty of trustees to take them on. Some may even find this a challenging delight. But until the ideas and rhetoric of top officials are incarnated in the daily life and activity of the institution, the school can hardly be called religious.

Conclusion

The future of church-related education is neither automatic nor guaranteed. Yet the historically proven value of these private institutions which serve a unique public purpose make it imperative that leaders be found who are willing and able to direct the destinies of these national treasures. Those leaders will need to be aware of the many challenges facing all of higher education. Beyond that, however, they will need to be especially sensitive to the challenges of identity, relationship and operations in their own institutions. They will also need to be confident of their own ability to make a difference. That means being knowledgeable, committed, and pro-active.

The discovery,recruiting and preparation of such leaders may be the number one challenge for the trustees of church-related institutions in the decade ahead.

The Author

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He received his undergraduate degree in business administration from Boston College, his master's degree from Boston College, his licentiate in theology from Weston College and his Ph. D. in business administration from New York University.

During the Second World War he attended M.I.T. and Brown University to study meteorology. He then served as a Captain in the Army Air Force in India and China.

For the last thirteen years he has served as president of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities in Washington, D.C. On September 1 he was assigned as a parish priest to St. Thomas Aquinas Church at the University of Connecticut where the Jesuits are experimenting with a new model of ministry to higher education.

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